

Massachusetts Water Resources Commission  
**Meeting Minutes for July 11, 1996**

**Commission Members in Attendance:**

Mike Gildesgame	Designee, Department of Environmental Management/Acting Chairman
Marilyn Contreas	Designee, EOCD Secretary
Dave Terry	Designee, Department of Environmental Protection
Lee Corte-Real	Designee, Department of Food and Agriculture
Joseph M. McGinn	Designee, Metropolitan District Commission
Mark Tisa	Designee, Department of Fisheries Wildlife and Environmental Law Enforcement
Jane Mead	Designee, EOEA Coastal Zone Management
Francis Veale	Public Member
Gary Clayton	Public Member

**Others in Attendance:**

Lou Wagner	MA Audubon, Lincoln
Michele Drury	DEM, Office of Water Resources
David Peatfield	Georgetown Water Dept.
Scott A. Miller	Haley and Ward, Georgetown Consultant
Bill Salomaa	DEM, Office of Water Resources
Peter Phippen	DEM, Office of Water Resources
Steve Asen	DEM, Office of Water Resources
Lealdon Langley	DEP, Water Management Program
Duane LeVangie	DEP/OWM
Gretchen Roorbach	MWRA
Gary Davis Jr.	DEP
Keith Davison	West Roxbury

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| Agenda Item #1: Adoption of the Minutes of June 13, 1996 meeting

A motion was made by McGinn and seconded by Corte-Real to

ADOPT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JUNE 13, 1996.

**The motion passed unanimously.**

| Agenda Item #2: Staff Reports:

A. Gildesgame announced that Executive Director Sharon McGregor will be leaving state service to pursue an advanced degree.

B. Gildesgame handed out a memo dated July 10, 1996 from DEM Counsel Mary Ann Nelson

reviewing state laws governing water rates in Massachusetts. Commissioners were requested to review the memo for possible future discussion.

C. Gildesgame noted that he discussed the NAPHCC water conservation proposal with McGregor. The next step for the WRC is to request a more specific profile of the type community that would benefit from implementation of the proposal. Capital and fixed costs and the impact on fixed rates issues need to be clarified. McGregor suggested a letter be sent to Mr. Whelan requesting additional information.

D. Gildesgame passed out DEM/MDC Forests and Parks Lake and Pond brochures, developed primarily to coincide with the New England Aquarium's exhibit on lakes and ponds.

E. Drury noted a draft EIR was submitted by Brockton as follow-up to the ENF submitted in 1990 pertaining to the proposed Taunton River water supply diversion. Drury noted the diversion would most likely not trigger review under the Interbasin Transfer Act.

Agenda Item #3: EOEa Basin Team Activities and Water Management Act permitting in the Parker River Basin and Vote on Georgetown water needs forecast

Phippen presented a summary hydrologic description of the basin. He noted that the flow duration curve for the Parker River is moderately sloped, which is typical for eastern Massachusetts rivers. Georgetown wells and return locations are upstream of the U.S.G.S. streamflow gage which is located in Byfield. Phippen commented that the relatively small increase in pumping over the permit period will most likely be undetectable at the gage. He also commented that existing water supply activity in Georgetown may not be detectable at the gage. Parker River flow records reveal that low flows as low as 1 cfs or less are not unusual. Low flows are a result of the basin natural hydrology and precipitation; water supply operations are unlikely to have a significant impact.

Clayton noted that juvenile fish are prevented from migrating down stream during extreme low flow periods. LeVangie noted that some biomonitoring has been conducted in the basin. Public hearings will be held later this year to educate the public. The basin team does not have the ability to assess incremental water supply impacts on low flows and the effects on river and stream habitat because the magnitude of proposed increases in water supply withdrawals is minimal.

Langley handed out a summary of water supply activity in the basin. He reported that no permits have been issued to water suppliers in the Parker basin to date. Georgetown submitted water demand projections in May 1995 which were approved by the WRC. Georgetown's current water demand exceeds that 2015 projection. Now Georgetown has presented additional information, which has been reviewed, to support slightly higher water demand projections. Langley noted that DEP attempts to control water use while providing for adequate supply.

A motion was made by Veale and seconded by McGinn to

TO APPROVE THE REVISED WATER NEEDS FORECAST FOR GEORGETOWN.

**The motion was approved unanimously.**

Agenda Item #4: Interbasin Transfer Review: Discussion on Holden, West Boylston sewerage proposal by MDC

Drury explained that staff has reviewed the proposal at an informal meeting of several WRC members. The Act does not apply since the wastewater conveyance pipes that cross the basin boundary have been in place since prior to the effective date of the Interbasin Transfer Act. The proposed expansion area was included in facilities plans which also predate the Act. The Act provides for specific exemptions, including "the installation and use of wastewater and water supply facilities which although not fully constructed and or useful have achieved MEPA compliance and approval by DEP prior to the effective date of the Act, [March 8, 1984]". This project was planned and approved as of 1978. Drury noted comments on the proposal have been received and reviewed by staff.

McGinn noted that Nashua River basin streamflow will not be impacted. Flows are currently, and will continue to be controlled by statutory releases from the Wachusett Reservoir dam. In response to comments on how the increased discharge to the Blackstone River will effect Blackstone River water quality, McGinn noted that West Boylston, Holden and Rutland conveyance facilities are independent of the Worcester wastewater system, that the forecasted volume of flow from these communities will be within the operational capacity of the Upper Blackstone Water Pollution Abatement District plant, and that the increasing flow will have no affect on the plant's ability to meet its existing NPDES permit limits.

Agenda Item #5: Report on Results from Two Recent Surveys

Gildesgame handed out the recently prepared water conservation survey sent to water suppliers not served by MWRA and who do not have a Water Management Act withdrawal permit. Most respondents do not meet the water conservation standards. Many suppliers expressed a need for additional sources, but have not considered conservation as an alternative. WRC staff will coordinate with New England Water Works Association to reach out to water supply and town officials.

Gildesgame handed out the recently prepared survey on how users of USGS/DEM cooperative studies use the publications. He noted that one of the primary functions of the WRC, via DEM/OWR, is to collect water resources data and conduct water resources analysis to be presented in publications. Staff mailed out survey questionnaires to poll users on how useful the data and reports are, and how they could be improved. Users include professional consultants, municipal health departments, municipal employees, and other government agencies. General findings indicate that users rely heavily on data and research findings in carrying out their professional activities. Users would like more computer access to data and studies, and many users would like data and research expanded.

Agenda Item #6: Report on the GEIR on Eutrophication and Aquatic Weed Control

Gildesgame updated the status of GEIR. The GEIR was originally published in 1978 and included a literature search and review of Lake management issues. In April 1994 Secretary of EOEAD determined the project to update the GEIR to be major and complicated. A citizens advisory

committee was established which included all stakeholders. DEM and DEP are responsible for overseeing the development of the GEIR. The GEIR updates the literature search and management methods, identifies trends in eutrophication and growth and spread of aquatic species over the last ten years. Trends in controlling aquatic weeds and associated cost are analyzed. Guidelines for selecting options and obtaining permits to implement selected options are presented.

Public review is scheduled for September 1996. The primary audience will be conservation commissions and government agencies. One goal of the document is to provide conservation commissions with a standardized, authoritative source for assessing lake management projects, including permitting. Regional planning agencies will eventually be involved in providing training for local conservation commission members.

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meeting minutes approved 8/8/96

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